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ABSTRACT

Now that educational reform has targeted principal performance as a key to school excellence, methods and procedures for evaluating these administrators have become an increasing concern. Current studies suggest that evaluation practices used in many districts are ill-suited to improving principals' performance and professional competence. Many principals corroborate these findings. This bulletin focuses on the principal evaluation process. Chapter 1, a summary of research and knowledge, reviews current practices for evaluating principals and describes three important phases (planning for evaluation, collecting information, and using information) that school officials must plan and implement to develop a sound evaluation system. Besides being carefully planned, an evaluation system should specify commitment to professional development and accountability, clear expectations and performance criteria, data collection from a variety of sources, and ongoing communication between evaluators and principals. Chapter 2 describes strategies to provide principals with specific and confidential feedback from superiors, peers, and teachers. The next two chapters describe principal evaluation systems developed in two Oregon school districts--the Tigard School District and the North Clackamas Schools. The final chapter offers several recommendations for districts desiring to improve their principal evaluation methods. Included are a list of 28 references and 10 interviews. (MLH)

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EVALUATING PRINCIPALS

Strategies to Assess and Enhance Their Performance

Mark E. Anderson

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Preface

Because of the mounting research evidence that indicates a principal's leadership is a key to achieving excellence in America's schools, the Oregon School Study Council has featured a series of publications during the past year on the principalship. Beginning with the May 1988 OSSC Bulletin—*Hiring Capable Principals: How School Districts Recruit, Groom, and Select the Best Candidates*—author Mark E. Anderson argued that school officials must devote more time, energy, and money to train and select principals. Then, in the October 1988 OSSC Bulletin—*Inducting Principals: How School Districts Help Beginners Succeed*—Anderson documented the need for veteran school personnel to provide new principals with a better-organized set of postselection induction activities to ease rookies' transition to school leadership.

Getting a top-notch principal does not end when a principal is hired and introduced to his or her important leadership role. School districts, therefore, must develop and use sound strategies to ensure that principals continue to grow and develop effective leadership skills throughout their professional career as school leaders. A well-designed and comprehensive evaluation system is one way to better ensure such growth. Unfortunately, the methods that many districts use to evaluate principals are not designed in such a way to enhance principal performance, but instead merely fulfill accountability requirements of laws that require principals to be evaluated. In fact, many principals report that they are rarely observed by superiors and often do not understand the basis on which their performance is judged.

Although recent research on the evaluation of principals is somewhat discouraging, an encouraging sign—documented in the following pages—is that several school systems are making efforts to provide principals with a comprehensive system of evaluation. In this Bulletin, Anderson reviews current research on principal evaluation and describes efforts in two Oregon school districts that have devoted a great deal of time and energy to improving the methods by which they assess and enhance principal performance.

Anderson, a member of the OSSC staff, has been a principal for the past ten years in Washington. Currently, he is a doctoral candidate in the

Division of Educational Policy and Management at the University of Oregon. Anderson's doctoral dissertation is focusing on the job-specific information and assistance that beginning principals in Oregon and Washington need during the critical first year in the principal's chair.

Philip K. Piele
Executive Secretary

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Introduction

Everywhere in America today educators are under pressure to perform more competently and to show measurable results. Although such pressures in the past tended to focus on teachers and their performance, the recent clamor for educational reform has zeroed in on principals and their performance as a key to achieving excellence in our nation's schools. As Richard Schmuck (1988) points out, "Never before in our nation's striving for school change has the focus on the principal as the primary change agent been stronger." Hence, the methods and procedures that school districts use to evaluate principals have become an increasing concern to the public, school boards, superintendents, other educators, and even principals themselves.

Current studies suggest that evaluation practices used in many districts are ill-suited to improving the performance and professional competence of school principals. In fact, many principals report that performance evaluations by superiors are infrequent and, when done, not specific or helpful. Researchers Joseph Murphy, Philip Hallinger, and Kent Peterson (1985) contend that principal evaluation has remained "substantially unchanged" over the years. Many principals, they found, are "neither supervised nor evaluated on a regular basis."

John Daresh (1987) found similar concerns about the adequacy of evaluation practices among principals with whom he spoke. These principals told Daresh

> They never knew if they were really doing what was considered to be a good job, and no one in their schools or districts appeared inclined to provide much feedback or direction to help them understand how they were doing. This lack of feedback was an issue that principals felt from every level of the organization—superiors, peers, and subordinates.

As discouraging as this might sound, an encouraging sign—documented in the following pages—is that several educators and school districts are making efforts to improve the methods by which principals are evaluated. Given the importance of principals and the need for sound methods to assess and enhance their performance, this Bulletin focuses on the important proc-

ess of evaluating principals. In chapter 1, a summary of research and knowledge provides an overview of current practices for evaluating principals and describes three important phases of the evaluation process that school officials must carefully plan and carry out to develop a sound system of evaluation.

Chapter 2 presents examples of strategies that provide principals with specific and confidential performance feedback from superiors, peers, and teachers. Chapter 3 features the system developed in the Tigard School District to evaluate principals, and chapter 4 highlights the evaluation program used in North Clackamas Schools. The final chapter offers several recommendations for districts that want to improve the methods by which they evaluate principals.

I am indebted to many administrators in Tigard and North Clackamas schools for sharing their time and insights into effective strategies for evaluating principals. Without their cooperation, I would not have been able to gain many of the specific ideas that are shared in this Bulletin.

Chapter 1

An Overview of Current Practice for Evaluating Principals

> Most institutions and their leaders are being asked to prove they make a difference, to show that they produce results. Believing is no longer seeing; most people want it the other way around. We are paying attention to the evaluation of educational administrators because people doubt their "virtues". . . .Our current interest in evaluation cannot be separated from the general decline of faith in public schools. We are bothering because people are bothered. (Terrence Deal 1983)

On the heels of the school accountability movement that flourished in the 1970s, public demand for administrator evaluation increased throughout the United States, most markedly during the 1980s. Due, in part, to the realization that principals are key players in influencing the performance and attitudes of students and faculty, formal evaluation procedures are now being advocated, researched, legislated, and implemented.

One indicator of this increased emphasis on assessing principals' performance is the growing number of states now mandating their evaluation. According to a 1988 research report released by the Southern Educational Improvement Laboratory (Stephen Peters), only two states required principal evaluation in the early 1970s, "but within a 10-year span from 1977 to the present, most states began or were planning to begin statewide programs for principal evaluation."

The Educational Research Service (ERS) (1985), which has been documenting administrative evaluation practices since 1962, found a similar increase in evaluation programs for principals in its latest nationwide survey of school districts. "The results of the 1984 ERS survey indicate that 85.9 percent of the responding districts currently have formal evaluation systems

for administrators."

A dilemma that school districts and states face when evaluating principals is determining what ends the process should serve—accountability, professional improvement, or both? After completing a study of principal evaluation practices in Oregon, Dan Duke and Richard Stiggens (1985) concluded that most school district evaluation systems appear to be designed for accountability and very few seem to "provide principals with the systematic feedback on performance they need to plan their professional development." Attempting to balance accountability and professional improvement is, therefore, a tightrope school districts must walk in designing and implementing a comprehensive evaluation program for principals. Thus, this chapter begins with an overview of the purposes that principal evaluation can serve, then turns to describing various phases for assessing and enhancing their performance.

Purposes of Principal Evaluation

A review of the literature on principal evaluation reveals a multitude of purposes that the evaluation process may serve. Dale Bolton (1980) provides a general list of purposes that school districts should consider:

- improving performance of individuals
- supplying information for modification of assignments [including dismissal]
- protecting individuals or the school system
- rewarding superior performance
- validating the selection process
- facilitating self-evaluation
- changing goals or objectives
- modifying procedures

Although the reasons for evaluating principals are numerous (the above list is certainly not all inclusive), research indicates that the purposes can be divided into two general categories:

1. *Formative Evaluation*—Evaluation serves as a means to help principals improve their performance. This evaluation process requires ongoing communication between superiors and principals, with the focus on improving not only principal performance, but the overall educational program as well.
2. *Summative Evaluation*—Evaluation serves as an end, a judgment of performance on which to base principals' promotion, demotion, incentive pay rewards, and other personnel actions.

Table 1—developed by ERS (1985)—illustrates the differences between formative and summative evaluation and outlines the various compo-

nents of each approach.

Most districts responding to the ERS survey indicated they attempt to combine the formative and summative approaches; however, many principals contend that the only feedback they receive is in the form of summative evaluation of their performance. William Harrison and Kent Peterson (1988) report that districts that only use the summative evaluation approach often

Table 1
Components of Two Major Purposes of Evaluation

Purpose of Evaluation	*Role of Supervisor*	*Process*	*Uses*	*Focus*
Formative Evaluation serves as a means to improve performance	Counselor	Ongoing communication, feedback, assistance	Improve performance; interrelated with decision-making, goal development, and other administrative tasks	The improvement of the educational system
Summative Evaluation serves as an end, a final judgment	Judge	Specific culminating judgment	Basis for merit pay, promotion, demotion, inservice training, transfer, and similar personnel decisions	The individual and his or her performance

Source: Educational Research Service (1985). Reprinted by permission.

fail to provide principals with the feedback necessary for professional growth and improvement. One principal in their study describes the inadequacy of such a practice: "Last year I was never visited by the evaluator and I received all 'superior performance' ratings—not very effective or helpful to me."

One of the questions in the field of evaluation is whether formative and summative evaluation are compatible. According to Ronald Cammaert (1987), "Most of the current models of performance appraisal assume that both purposes can be achieved within one program." Carol Allen and Leonard Pellicer (1984) agree and contend that school districts must become committed to "integrating" the formative and summative approaches to assist principals "in attaining high levels of success."

Districts that incorporate both approaches when evaluating principals obtain several advantages. On the summative side, school districts enhance

their standing with the public when they hold principals accountable for good work and dismiss or reassign incompetent principals. As Elio Zappulla (1983) contends, "The public wants, and indeed deserves, some assurance from the board that the money it so agonizingly pays out in the form of property taxes, most of which goes toward employee salaries, is being used to pay the best people for doing the best job." Given the importance of principals in the educational process, providing the public with evidence that a district rigorously evaluates principal performance is "not only advisable but indeed mandatory," Zappulla writes.

On the formative side of evaluation, meaningful communication with and effective supervision of principals not only enhances principals' performance but also assists in improving the entire educational system as well. Ruben Ingram (1986) suggests that providing principals with a well-designed formative evaluation process can help build "strong linkages and commitment to achieving the district's long-range goals." In a study of districts with effective evaluation programs for principals, Murphy, Hallinger, and Peterson found superintendents who used both formative and summative evaluation processes and, in so doing, closely linked the yearly objectives of principals with board and superintendent goals. In addition, those superintendents used both approaches to provide principals with candid and timely feedback, to build morale, and to model "what they believed were important aspects of school district management."

In the past few years, educators have developed a variety of models and procedures that combine the formative and summative approaches into one comprehensive evaluation system. The next section outlines three important phases of principal evaluation that emphasize incorporation of both approaches.

Three Phases of Evaluation

Researchers seem to agree that school districts must carefully plan and implement three important phases for developing a systematic and successful evaluation scheme that meets the twin functions of accountability and professional improvement. According to Bolton, those phases are:

1. *Planning for evaluation*, which involves analysis of a specific situation, establishment of purposes for evaluation, setting of goals and specific objectives, and deciding on means for measuring the processes used and the eventual outcomes.
2. *Collecting information*, which involves monitoring and measuring the activities planned and the outcomes that result from the activities.
3. *Using information*, which includes communication regarding the analysis and interpretation of information as well as making decisions about the next steps to be taken.

Bolton emphasizes that the information analyzed in the third phase provides the basis for reviewing principal performance and resetting goals and objectives; "therefore, it becomes a natural prelude to the first phase, allowing the cycle to be repeated." This process is illustrated in figure 1.

Phase 1—Planning for Evaluation

As the first essential step toward planning an effective evaluation system, the school board, supervisory personnel, principals, and other district educators specify the school system's values, philosophy toward evaluation, purposes of the process, and expectations of principals. Cammaert contends that school districts that develop "written statements of purpose which are clear, precise, and complete are more likely to produce a sound basis for open communication and cooperative relationships than programs designed around ambiguous or unwritten purposes." The following additional steps must also be addressed in the planning phase:

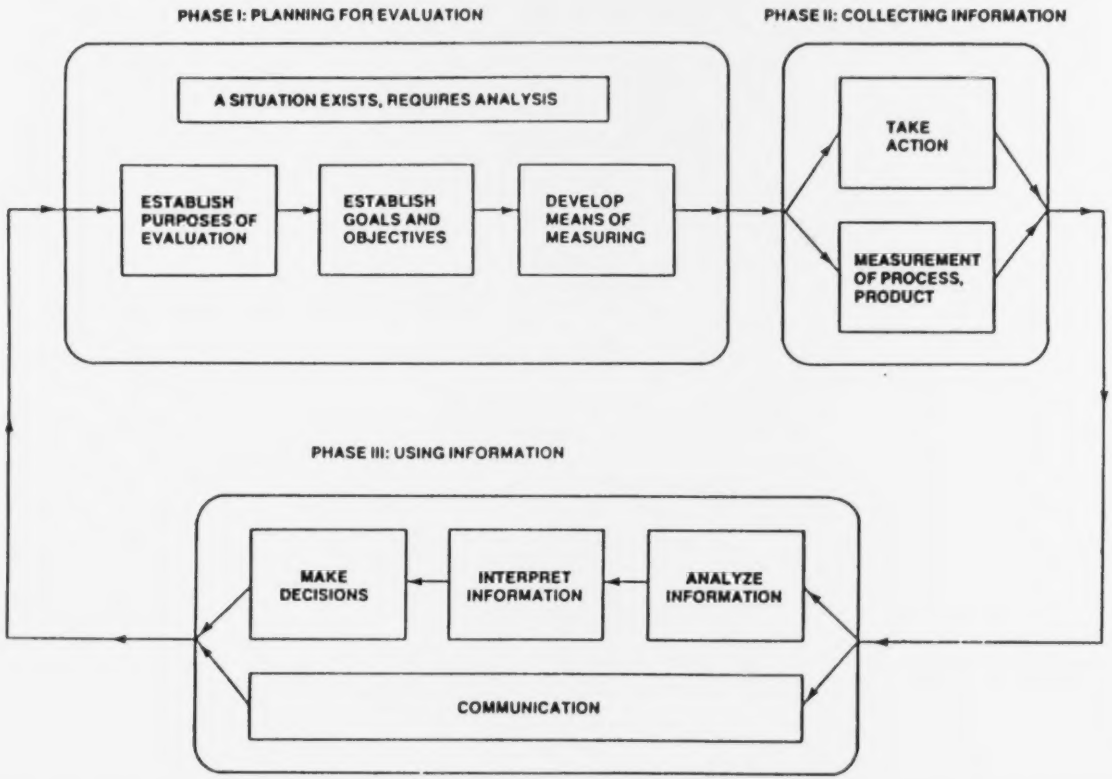
- defining criteria upon which principal performance will be judged
- defining individual and school system goals
- choosing the methods used to collect information on principal performance and progress toward targeted goals
- deciding who will collect and evaluate that information
- agreeing on the level of expertise needed by evaluators
- deciding financial and time considerations
- determining principals' perceptions of validity of procedures

Who Plans and How

A critical mistake made in the planning phase by many districts is not involving a broad base of school personnel in designing the evaluation system. According to Jerry Valentine (1987), too often change occurs from the top down. "A superintendent attends a conference or workshop, hears an exciting speaker, returns to the homefront and mandates the change. This change process infrequently makes an impact." To ensure effective and lasting change in principal evaluation practices, Valentine recommends that a committee representative of principals, central office supervisory personnel, teachers, and board members plan the program. Following are a set of tasks Valentine suggests such a committee carefully complete:

- Review current literature on effective schools, effective administration, and evaluation.
- Review evaluation models from other districts and states.
- Interact with consultants regarding research and principal evaluation models.

Figure 1
A Three-Phase, Cyclical Process for Evaluation of Personnel



Reprinted by permission of the publisher from Bolton, Dale L., EVALUATING ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL IN SCHOOL SYSTEMS. (New York: Teachers College Press, © 1980 by Teachers College, Columbia University. All rights reserved.), p. 40.

- Draft a principal evaluation system for the district.
- Present draft to all district principals for input and refinement.
- Revise draft per input into a recommended system for the district.
- Present the proposed system to the Board for approval.
- Present the approved system to the educators of the district.

Valentine also strongly recommends that school districts use an experienced consultant as a resource person during the planning phase. To support this recommendation, he cites a recent study of 405 districts implementing new evaluation systems:

> Those districts which used consultants implemented systems which were more effective, had more internal support, and were more likely to make a significant impact upon the educational program than districts which implemented new systems without the direct assistance of a consultant.

Clear Expectations Needed

Determining and communicating what is expected of principals—performance criteria—appears to be the most critical aspect of the planning phase. Harrison and Peterson believe principals must "clearly understand their superiors' expectations" to perform successfully. Valentine agrees: "The professional development of principals cannot be accomplished without a clear understanding of the personal skills a principal is expected to master and the organizational outcomes a principal is expected to accomplish."

Research indicates, however, that districts often fail to provide principals with a clear understanding of what is expected of them. In their study of evaluation practices, Harrison and Peterson found many principals who were uncertain about superintendent expectations for their performance. They contend that "superintendents must make their expectations for principal performance clear, ensuring that principals understand the tasks they are to accomplish, the criteria used to assess performance, the type of data used, and the ways performance outcomes are appraised." Duke and Stiggens found similar confusion among principals. It is vital, they conclude, that superiors better articulate their expectations for principal performance and "expend greater effort in explaining the evaluation system to those subject to it."

Setting Goals and Objectives

Another important aspect of the planning phase is the development of school system, school building, and individual performance goals and objectives. The apparent success of Management by Objectives (MBO) in industry has encouraged educators to try this approach in schools. According to ERS, the 1984 survey found that 83.3 percent of responding districts "now

use performance objectives as a part of their evaluation program."

An MBO program typically involves an annual organizational review where district goals are set. Then principals and supervisors establish specific goals and objectives on which principals will work throughout the year. In addition, principals along with their staffs set school goals that represent desired outcomes for the school year over which the principal can have some impact.

Valentine contends that principals often set goals that are too simplistic. From his research on the use of school goal setting for the purpose of assessing principal performance, Valentine found that many times the goals set by principals were simply a listing of "statements about personal administrative skills rather than desired outcomes." Furthermore, "the goals frequently reflected activities already completed or nearly completed and did not make a significant difference in the quality of life or program of the school," he writes.

Valentine recommends that principals need training in goal setting to help them identify meaningful school goals. In addition, he suggests that school faculties and principals only focus on four to six goals each year—"two or three unique to a particular school and two or three correlated with district goals." From this list of goals, principals can then set specific objectives that will help them and their staffs strive toward desired outcomes.

According to the American Association of School Administrators (1977), a significant roadblock to the MBO/Goal-Centered approach to evaluation is the "failure of the school board to establish overall-system goals and objectives." Furthermore, the lack of desire on the part of superintendents to set goals is another "chief reason why so few sound evaluation plans are in operation." AASA strongly believes that the existence of "organizational goals and objectives which are then linked to clearly-understood and personally-developed individuals efforts. . . can make for an entirely new and rewarding environment for work."

A clear understanding of what is expected of principals, the development of districtwide and school building goals, and the identification of principal goals and objectives are all essential prerequisites for activities in the second phase of evaluation—collecting information.

Phase II—Collecting Information: The Who, What, Where, When, and How of Evaluation

Collecting information or sampling performance is another important phase in the evaluation process. The data-collection phase, along with communicating results, is at the crux of the "formative" approach to evaluation, according to Valentine. He contends that the formative phase of collecting information "is the most significant series of events in an evaluation process designed to promote personal growth and organizational development."

Valentine points out that at least "90% of the time and energy given to evaluative activities should be made in the formative phase."

Unfortunately, many principals report that they often do not know what information is collected on their performance nor how it is obtained. Harrison and Peterson found that only half of the principals they surveyed "claimed to know how the superintendent accumulated information upon which they based their evaluations." It is important, therefore, that school officials not only develop and adopt sophisticated collection strategies, but also communicate to principals who, what, when, where, and how information will be collected.

Superintendent and Supervisors Collect Data

In a survey by Robert Buser and Freddie Banks, Jr. (1984) of elected heads of state affiliates of several national administrator and teacher associations, all groups of respondents overwhelmingly supported the superintendent as the primary person responsible for observation and evaluation activities (over 90 percent). Superintendents or supervisors can collect data through onsite visits where they shadow the principal for extended periods, recording specific statements and actions made. They can also observe principals performing specific job functions. Faculty meetings, parent conferences, teacher observation and evaluation conferences, and public meetings all can be observed for the purpose of collecting information and evaluating performance.

Valentine recommends that the evaluator schedule a preconference or at least make contact with the principal prior to "scheduled observations" to agree upon the "time and specific tasks to be observed." In addition, he suggests that evaluators make "unscheduled observations" to provide opportunities for observing more "typicality" in principal performance "than with the scheduled observation."

Although it appears that the direct observation and supervision of principals by superiors are critical for obtaining reliable data, many superintendents or supervisors do not directly observe the performance of principals. In their study, Duke and Stiggens found that most evidence for principal evaluation derives only from superiors' perceptions of how principals' perform, versus directly observing them. "One reason for why good evidence is missing may simply be the fact that supervisors of principals lack the time needed to conduct thorough observations," Duke and Stiggens write. Thus, one way to increase the likelihood that useful information will be gathered is to "involve other school personnel in collecting information on principal performance," they conclude.

Peer Collection Strategies

Peer observations and review of principal performance is a promising

new strategy for providing principals with feedback on their performance. One such information-gathering and feedback strategy is Peer-Assisted Leadership (PAL), featured in the October 1988 OSSC Bulletin (Anderson). The Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development began PAL in 1983 to assist principals in collecting data about fellow administrators and then sharing the information with their colleagues in a useful manner. According to Bruce Barnett (1985), participating principals indicate that they benefit from shadowing and working with other principals and that they practice more self-reflection, a process found useful in helping them improve their skills and run their schools.

Peer supervision/evaluation is an innovation that as yet does not appear to have wide acceptance. ERS found that only 2 percent of the responding districts in the 1984 survey used peer supervision as a part of their evaluation systems for principals. Duke and Stiggens, in their review of evaluation practices in Oregon, also found few systems currently using peer review as one of the components of the evaluation process. They surmised that the lack of interest in peer review may be a function of time constraints for principals or a comment on the competitive relationships among principals in the same district.

Client-Centered Feedback

Information and feedback from clients—teachers, parents, and students—can also be used to evaluate principal performance. Donald Langlois (1986) suggests that principals invite teachers to evaluate their performance. "No one is in a better position than teachers," Langlois contends, "to determine whether a principal is performing satisfactorily." According to Langlois, several districts have successfully used teacher evaluation of principal performance as a part of a comprehensive evaluation process. He suggests that principals use the information to improve their performance and to become aware of staff needs. "Use the results only for your own information," says Langlois; "do not send them to the central office."

As in the case of peer review, client-centered ratings of principal performance are not a common evaluation tactic in many school districts. Fewer than 1 percent of the responding districts in the 1984 ERS survey reported that they systematically collect teacher, parent, or student perceptions of principal performance. Through interviews with school leaders for *The Executive Educator*, Marilee Rist (1986) was able to document the concern among school leaders about client-centered evaluation of principals. Scott Thompson, executive director of the 42,000-member National Association of Secondary School Principals, told Rist, "We have no objection to the informal, nonofficial evaluation of principals by teachers on a confidential basis. We do object, however, to the formal, official evaluation of principals by teachers with the evaluation filed in the principals' personnel records at the district headquarters."

Nevertheless, as we will see in chapter 2, confidential feedback on principal performance from teachers is a promising strategy for providing principals with useful and specific information that can assist them in improving their actions.

The Assessment Center Approach

Assessing principals' skills and performance through assessment center simulations is another strategy districts can use to collect information for evaluating principal performance. The National Association of Secondary School Principals has designed a number of simulations for its Assessment Center Project (Hersey 1982).

In a typical assessment center, twelve participants are observed completing simulation exercises by a team of trained assessors who record participants' behaviors on twelve skill dimensions. Then, the team of assessors discuss each participant and reach consensus on his or her performance. In an intensive feedback session, each participant receives a comprehensive report describing his or her strengths and weaknesses, plus suggestions for improvement.

Although the Assessment Center Project's initial purpose was to identify talented new administrators, its potential for helping improve veteran principal performance soon became apparent. According to Larry Hughes, Mary Murphy, and Martha Wong (1986), Houston schools use their assessment center "to scrutinize and develop the competencies of current school executives." From their experience with the assessment center evaluation approach, Hughes, Murphy, and Wong conclude that it improves leadership among school principals and is better than traditional methods of recruitment, evaluation, and performance development.

However, principals with whom Rist talked for *The Executive Educator* questioned the use of centers for principals already on the job. Robert Benson told Rist, "An assessment center is a good way—but not the only way—to evaluate a principal. Also assess my record on the job. Don't ignore what I'm doing." John Jenkins, who was trained in an assessment center and who has served as an assessor, offers a similar caution: "A good system of clinical supervision is more effective for determining the strengths and weaknesses of practicing school principals. Clinical supervision gets at the on-the-job performance, not just simulated exercises." With such mixed reviews, school districts may consider using the assessment center approach as only one of several components in a comprehensive evaluation system.

Other Data Collection Strategies

Artifacts are other important pieces of information that should be collected to assess principal performance. Student test scores; written evi-

dence of progress toward a principal's personal, school, and district goals; principal awards and recognitions; newspaper clippings, parent newsletters, and letters to staff and students; and logs of how principals spend their time are examples of artifacts that can be used as a part of the collection process. Valentine suggests that principals need to "know prior to the beginning of the school year the types of artifact data that will be required so arrangements can be made to collect those data." He also recommends that supervisors discuss artifacts with principals during conferences throughout the year as well as at the end of the school year.

As we can see, a variety of school personnel can be involved in the critical collection phase of evaluation, and it takes a great deal of time and commitment to obtain useful and reliable information.

Phase III—Using Information

Analyzing, interpreting, and making decisions from the information gathered in phase II constitute the last important aspect of the evaluation process. To use information effectively, it is vital that supervisors and principals communicate about the information collected throughout the year, not just in a summary report at year's end. As Bolton notes, "There is not much doubt that the process of communication is extremely important during Phase I. However, it becomes even more important during Phase III." Bolton suggests that far too often there is a tendency for the evaluator and the principal to avoid contact after data are collected and to analyze, interpret, and make decisions before a conference with each other. When this practice exists "the other person's insight is lost and poor decisions may be made," Bolton writes.

Providing Feedback

Conferences between supervisors and principals are an important means for communicating feedback on performance to principals. To be effective, conferences must be carefully planned, purposeful, and completed as soon after data collection as possible. As Bolton contends, "The accumulation of information over a long period of time is not as beneficial as providing it soon after events occur."

Valentine suggests that effective conferences are based on the internal motivation for improvement by the principal, not external motivation from the evaluator. Thus, a skilled evaluator "promotes this internal motivation by involving the principal in the discussion and promoting self-assessment of skills through inquiry, probing questions, and comments." Effective conferences, therefore, are "more accurately described as a self-assessment, coaching conference than as a feedback conference," Valentine writes.

Interspersing constructive criticism and positive feedback throughout

conferences is another strategy effective evaluators use. From his research on principal evaluation practices, Valentine has found that far too often "evaluators spend the first thirty minutes of conferences discussing all the 'good' skills and save the 'bad' skills for the last few minutes." Such a practice, however, promotes "inattentiveness during the 'strokes' due to anxiety while awaiting the 'zingers'." Communicating both positive and negative feedback is important if principals are to improve, according to Harrison and Peterson. They found that over "twice as many superintendents as principals reported they communicate dissatisfaction." To provide principals with useful information about what they can correct, maintain, or improve, Harrison and Peterson recommend "more frequent communication regarding principals' performance—whether it is satisfaction or dissatisfaction."

Making Decisions

Only after ongoing communication throughout the school year between the evaluator and the principal should final summative reports be written and decisions made about the next steps to be taken. Valentine even suggests that principals and evaluators identify areas for improvement and develop growth plans during the year, not just at the final evaluation conference. For the summative evaluation, the principal and evaluator should take into account the principal's performance and efforts throughout the year and make final judgments regarding performance on each criteria (expectation) that was established during phase I. In addition, they should document the principal's progress toward school- and system-wide goals during the summative evaluation conference.

With summative information in hand, goals, objectives, and final growth plans should be developed, starting the cycle of evaluation over again, beginning with phase I, planning for evaluation.

Decisions about Employment Status and Merit Pay

The last aspect of an evaluation is a decision regarding employment status and pay. Valentine argues that regardless of the time when contractual decisions are made, such decisions should be based on the data collected during the year and summarized in summative evaluation documents. "To determine employment on any basis other than the findings would be unfair to the principal," Valentine writes.

Merit pay or incentive pay is a special consideration in the evaluation process. According to its proponents, incentive pay enables school districts to compensate principals according to their performance effectiveness, thus providing more motivation for improvement. When Duke and Stiggens asked principals to identify shortcomings in their current evaluation system, "more respondents cited lack of rewards for outstanding performance than

any other problem." Unfortunately, as the ERS reports, "experience indicates that developing an incentive pay system is a complicated process, and one that, even more than a standard evaluation system, requires careful planning and consideration." Citing Bruce Kienapfel's analysis of merit pay systems for school principals, ERS lists the following five components that must be in place to increase the likelihood of successfully adopting a merit pay system for principals:

1. *Component 1*—A sound, district wide decision-making process that encourages broad-based input from the whole staff.
2. *Component 2*—A salary schedule that accurately places administrative positions in a justifiable relationship to each other and reflects in financial terms the requirements and responsibilities of each administrative position.
3. *Component 3*—An assessment process that accurately defines the characteristics and activities of an excellent administrator and accurately discriminates between a superior and a below-average administrator.
4. *Component 4*—A conversion formula that financially rewards excellent administrative performance by converting assessment scores into salary increases.
5. *Component 5*—A review process designed to improve the assessment, salary, and merit system on a frequent basis.

Given the difficulties in implementing a sound system for merit pay, districts might want to consider other ways to reward outstanding performance, such as incentives for professional development and opportunities for improvement. As we will see in chapters 3 and 4, Oregon districts with exemplary principal evaluation programs use such an approach as a part of their comprehensive evaluation systems.

Summary

Whatever methods districts use to evaluate principals, the hallmarks of an effective evaluation system include careful planning, a commitment to professional development as well as accountability, clear expectations and criteria by which principal performance is judged, collection of data from a variety of sources, and ongoing communication between evaluators and principals. To improve their performance, principals must receive honest and constructive feedback through a system that they trust and in which they have a high degree of confidence. As we will see in the next chapter, providing principals with "confidential" feedback from superiors, peers, and teachers is a promising strategy to build such trust and help principals to improve their performance.

Chapter 2

Confidential Feedback Strategies That Improve Principal Performance

> People basically want to be competent and are interested in self-improvement. Yet, many evaluation systems are designed to find people incompetent. If you are genuinely interested in improving a person's performance, it can only be done when the person buys into it. There must, therefore, be a high trust level and a high degree of confidence in the process. (Gerald Bogen, associate dean, Division of Educational Policy and Management, College of Education, University of Oregon)

To take advantage of principals' desire to perform competently, educators are beginning to recognize that a variety of people—not just central office supervisors—should be involved in providing principals with feedback on their performance. Because it is important to ensure a high degree of trust, the process must be designed in such a way that the risk of losing face or self-respect is reduced. With this goal in mind, several educators and institutions have begun the development of confidential evaluation systems that can help principals obtain useful feedback on their performance from superiors, peers, and subordinates.

The Excellent Principal Inventory

During the 1987-88 school year, the BellSouth Corporation, with assistance from the management development firm of Keilty, Goldsmith, and Boone of La Jolla, California, began development of *The Excellent Principal Inventory*, a unique evaluation instrument that enables principals to obtain confidential feedback on their performance from superiors, peers, and teach-

ers. According to Gerald Bogen, an educational consultant with Keilty, Goldsmith, and Boone, the consulting firm has designed and implemented training and management evaluation programs for a number of large corporations, including Weyerhaeuser, Boeing, Control Data, IBM, LaBatts, and BellSouth, to name a few. Because of BellSouth's positive experience in using the performance feedback system with many of its management personnel, the corporation's chairman of the board sponsored through its foundation the development of a performance feedback instrument and training session for principals in the nine southern states that BellSouth serves.

Organization Values and Commitments: The Starting Point

Bogen notes that the first step in designing any performance feedback system is the need for people within an organization to identify the values and behaviors that are important to the organization and its members. Without identification of an organization's key values, Bogen contends, developing a list of performance criteria is a fruitless endeavor. Thus, value statements that describe attitudes and behaviors of excellent principals were identified through a series of sessions involving principals from across the country working together with educational and management consultants from Keilty, Goldsmith, and Boone and management personnel from BellSouth. The instrument was refined by Bogen and advanced graduate students in the Division of Educational Policy and Management at the University of Oregon. Drawn from research on effective schools and literature on leadership and management, the following five key commitments reflect the values and behaviors that were developed for the *Excellent Principal Inventory*:

OUR COMMITMENTS

To Student Success:
- Demonstrating Respect for Students
- Pursuing All-Around Excellence

To Teaching and Learning:
- Promoting Teaching and Learning
- Supporting Continuous Learning as a Lifetime Goal

To the School Staff:
- Demonstrating Respect for the School Staff
- Helping Individuals Improve
- Building a Collegial Staff

To Innovation:
- Supporting Creativity
- Supporting Upward Communication

To Leadership:
- Demonstrating Integrity

- Presenting Ideas
- Taking Responsibility
- Relating to External Constituencies

Indicators of Excellent Principal Leadership Behaviors

To reinforce the values and behaviors that constitute the Five Key Commitments of the "Excellent Principal," eighty-nine specific behaviors were identified for the inventory. The following list of items under "Commitment to Leadership" provides an example of performance indicators listed in the instrument.

COMMITMENT TO LEADERSHIP

Demonstrating Integrity
- Shows a high degree of personal integrity in dealing with others
- Does what he or she believes is right, although it may not be popular
- Lives up to personal commitments made to others
- Leads by example
- Strives to ensure that actions and words are consistent
- Demonstrates sensitivity and respect to those of different social and cultural backgrounds

Presenting Ideas
- Articulates a clear vision of the school's direction
- Makes sure that the school's objectives are clearly understood
- Communicates in an open and candid manner
- Presents ideas effectively when speaking
- Communicates effectively in writing
- Provides effective orientation for new assignments
- Avoids talking down to others

Taking Responsibility
- Takes responsibility and ownership for his or her decisions
- Encourages and accepts constructive criticism
- Admits to his or her mistakes
- Makes decisions in a timely manner
- Demonstrates self-confidence as a leader

Relating to External Constituencies
- Keeps parents and the community informed about the school and its program
- Encourages and listens to ideas from parents and community members
- Works with dissenting individuals or groups within the community to reach understanding
- Is willing to challenge the district office when appropriate
- Does not pass the buck or blame the district office or school board

- Is sensitive to the interests of different racial and cultural populations

Collecting Feedback on Performance

According to Bogen, principals participating in the evaluation program distribute the feedback instrument to teachers in their schools as well as to peers and superiors whom "they believe are knowledgeable about their performance, whose opinions they value, and individuals who they believe will provide honest feedback to help in their professional development." In addition, participating principals complete the inventory themselves to assess their own performance.

Guaranteeing anonymity is a key aspect of the *Excellent Principal Inventory*. Individuals are asked not to sign their names, but the inventories are coded by teacher, other (peer and superior), and self. Bogen emphasizes that this evaluation system is clearly separated from the summative evaluation process. "It is a personal and confidential evaluation process designed for professional growth, not as an accountability system for making decisions relative to promotion, demotion, rewards, transfer, or dismissal," he says. Thus, a consultant and the principal are the only two individuals to see and discuss the results; the results are not sent to supervisors for the purpose of summative evaluation.

The inventory is divided into two major sections. Section 1 is a questionnaire that rates a principal's attitudes and actions on a five-point scale that reflects how satisfied the respondent is with a principal's performance on the eighty-nine specific performance indicators. The scale ranges from "Highly Dissatisfied" to "Highly Satisfied" and includes a "No Information" response category.

In section 2, respondents are given the opportunity to make written comments that can help the principal better understand which behaviors are most important to the respondents. In addition, respondents can use this section to provide feedback on issues not addressed in the questions or to emphasize items they feel strongly about. The following open-ended questions are provided:

1. This individual is especially effective in . . .
2. This individual could be even more effective in . . .
3. Other comments for this individual . . .

When respondents have completed the *Excellent Principal Inventory*, they send it to Keilty, Goldsmith, and Boone's scoring services in La Jolla, California. The scoring service tabulates the principal's scores and develops an individual performance profile.

Feedback Report

A crucial phase of the *Excellent Principal Inventory* program is providing principals with feedback on their performance and developing growth plans based on the results. Principals are not left alone to analyze and interpret the results, says Bogen. The scoring service provides the principal with a detailed profile summary report that a trained consultant explains and interprets in an intensive feedback conference held during part of a two-and-a-half-day followup training session.

Feedback results are displayed in a series of data tables, separated according to the "Five Key Commitment" categories. The data table for each category is further separated into results for "Classroom Teachers" and "Others"—peers and superiors. In addition, a darkened arrow indicates where principals rated themselves on each item.

The left-hand column of the data table indicates the total number of people who responded to each item and the date the inventory was processed. The next five columns denote the range of responses to each item from Highly Dissatisfied to Highly Satisfied. The right-hand column summarizes a principal's feedback results on each item under three headings: "Your Average," "Company Average," and "Your Percentile." The number under "Your Average" is the average value of all the responses. The number under "Company Average" indicates the average score of all principals who have taken the *Excellent Principal Inventory*. Finally, the number under "Your Percentile" indicates how the principal compares to all other principals. Principals also receive a typed copy of respondents' answers to open-ended questions in section 2.

A sample of a summary profile table is provided in figure 2. In this example, a principal receives high marks in the "Demonstrating Respect for the School Staff" category of the "Commitment to Staff" section of the inventory.

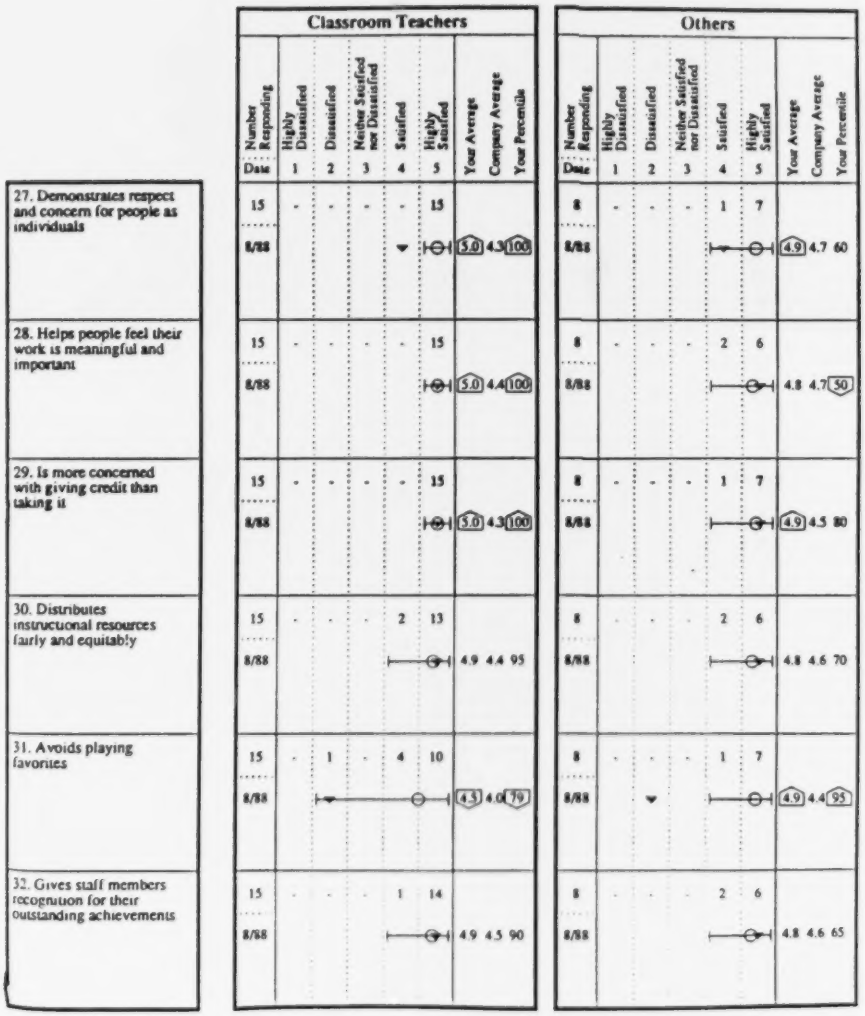
Using the Feedback for Improvement

Bogen reports that principals and consultants spend time during the feedback conference discussing and developing strategies to improve areas that respondents perceived as weaknesses. In addition, consultants use a summary report of all participating principals' scores to design specific training activities in which principals participate during the two-and-a-half-day workshop sessions.

In summer 1988, forty principals from Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina had the *Excellent Principal Inventory* completed by their staffs, peers, and superiors and participated in two followup training sessions in Knoxville, Tennessee. Bogen notes that participating principals were excited about the program and saw it as an excellent means to obtain feedback that they could use

Figure 2
Sample of Summary Profile Table
Excellent Principal Inventory

Demonstrating Respect For the School Staff



Source: Kielty, Goldsmith, and Boone (1988)

in self-appraisal efforts to improve their performance. Four programs for other principals are scheduled for Ashville, North Carolina, in the summer of 1989. Bogen also says that companies that have used the confidential feedback inventory report "great gains in management performance and company profitability."

One drawback to the program is the expense, Bogen notes. BellSouth has an ongoing commitment to providing principals in the nine southern states with performance feedback and training. Bogen is hopeful that other corporations will help defer costs of the program so that additional districts from around the country, including the Northwest, can involve principals in the program. With such positive results, the investment of monies could provide great benefits to school districts and principals. (Those districts interested in learning more about the *Excellent Principal Inventory* can contact Dr. Gerald Bogen, Associate Dean, Division of Educational Policy and Management, College of Education, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon 97403.)

Additional Confidential Feedback Instruments

Other educators and researchers are designing confidential feedback instruments similar to the *Excellent Principal Inventory*. Jerry Valentine and Michael Bowman (1986) began development of the *Audit for Principal Effectiveness* in 1983 with items generated from "an extensive review of the literature and research relative to the role of the principal." Valentine and Bowman also validated the items with over 1,500 teachers and administrators from across the country. Revised and copyrighted in 1986, the feedback instrument now includes eighty performance items under the categories of "Organizational Development," "Organizational Environment," and "Educational Program."

West Chester Area School District in Pennsylvania (Langlois 1986) and Kalamazoo Public Schools in Michigan (Kienapfel 1984) are examples of school systems that have developed and used teacher and peer feedback programs for evaluating principals. Thus, confidential feedback on principal performance from superiors, peers, and teachers appears to be a promising new formative evaluation strategy that school districts can use as a part of a comprehensive evaluation system.

The next chapters feature two Oregon school districts that have responded to the challenge of evaluating principals. Tigard and North Clackamas have developed and carried out comprehensive evaluation programs for principals that assess and enhance their performance.

Chapter 3

Tigard's Principal Evaluation Program Rewards Exemplary Performance

In 1986 the Tigard Public School District (1988-89 enrollment approximately 7,266 in 12 schools) began efforts to improve its evaluation program for principals. According to Superintendent Russell Joki, "The Board of Directors were dissatisfied with the administrative supervision and evaluation system in the district, and our administrators felt that it wasn't adequately addressing what they wanted out of evaluation." Prior to the current evaluation system in Tigard, Joki points out, "we had a number of instruments in place including a checklist instrument for rating principal performance, a management plan instrument, a goal setting instrument, and the district's Project BEST (Building Effective Schools Together)."

To improve the coordination of those processes and to provide better direction for planning and performance, "the principals as a group said there ought to be a way we can combine all these processes because they are all interrelated," Joki states. Thus, Tigard has devoted a great deal of time and effort during the past three years to develop a comprehensive evaluation system for principals entitled TAPE (Tigard Administrator Planning/Performance Evaluation), a data/goal-based system that is related to student outcomes and performance standards. Using the effective schools research, TAPE emphasizes profiling and goal setting as keys to planning and documenting the results and effects of leadership.

The systematic way in which the district planned the new evaluation system for principals has been critical to its success. "I think we did things right in that we went about developing it slowly and had broad participation at every level," says Joki. In 1986-87 a team of central office administrators and building principals reviewed research on effective schools and administrative evaluation practices and visited with other districts using new tech-

niques for evaluating principals to plan and design TAPE. Then, TAPE was piloted in 1987-88 and implemented in 1988-89. "Now we have a system in place with which principals, the Board, and supervisors are satisfied," says Joki. Neverthless, the program is designed for flexibility and can change as "circumstances and expectations change and as the district receives new information and ideas," Joki emphasizes.

This chapter presents Tigard's evaluation program for principals and describes various components of TAPE that provide the district with a structure for evaluating principal performance and improving the entire educational program as well.

Purpose of Evaluation

The purpose of Tigard's evaluation system for principals is to meet the twin functions of accountability and professional development. The "P" in the title TAPE signifies that Planning and Performance are both important aspects of a comprehensive evaluation system. According to Joki, the Planning portion of the title represents the "professional development component of evaluation" and the Performance part of the title characterizes "more of the accountability side." With these two general purposes for evaluation, the district has identified several specific reasons for its evaluation of principals.

One key purpose of TAPE is to link principal evaluation with the district's effort to use research on effective schools. Tigard has devoted considerable time and energy to incorporating the research on effective schools into the design of district educational programs and practices. Project BEST (Building Effective Schools Together) represents "the district's efforts to use effective schools research," says Joki. Thus, a cornerstone of the district's new evaluation system for principals is BEST, which emphasizes making decisions based on a variety of data, "rather than just making decisions from intuitive judgments," Joki emphasizes.

With data-based decision-making as an integral component of TAPE, the program has the following five specific purposes:

1. to provide a structure for annual goal setting and self-appraisal
2. to provide a structure for professional growth
3. to provide a structure for supervisor evaluation
4. to share BEST practices
5. to provide a structure for board review and recognition of leadership performance

Performance Standards and Expectations

To meet the multiple purposes of Tigard's evaluation system, a critical task was to determine specific standards and behaviors that were valued by

the district and by which principal performance and progress toward school and districtwide goals could be documented. After an extensive review of research on the characteristics of effective principals and considerable discussion among planning team members and principals, the district identified nine general review areas of principal responsibilities:

1. General Administration
2. Instruction
3. Project BEST
4. Student Programs
5. Community Relations
6. Coordinated Curriculum
7. Staff Development
8. Support Service Management
9. School Budgeting

In each of the nine general review areas, the district planning team identified several specific performance standards denoting behaviors and values that support the general areas of principal responsibilities. These performance standards, according to the TAPE document, "are used as a guideline for goal setting, self-appraisal and performance review." The performance standards also represent principal job descriptions and district expectations for leadership. Following are examples of three of the nine general areas of principal responsibilities and the specific performance standards—behaviors and values—under each.

Area 1 - General Administration

Performance Standards:

- *Behavioral.* Demonstrates certain behaviors including a sense of commitment and control, audience sensitivity, concern for feelings, awareness of issues, participation in group processes, self-appraisal, and a sense of professional ethics.
- *Planning and Organization.* Develops, consults, and shares a written plan/goal statement that coordinates decisions and provides a school wide sense of direction.
- *Decision Making.* Acts according to policy and rules but also considers situational factors to manage expectations. Publically supports policy and other school/program decisions. Appropriate delegation of responsibility is evident.
- *Communications.* Demonstrates the ability to communicate a "vision" of the school to staff, parents, and students and keeps them informed of plans and events. Speaks and writes with clarity and purpose.

Area 2 - Instruction

Performance Standards:

- *Supervision.* Makes frequent supervisory visits and provides teachers/staff with specific and immediate feedback.
- *Teaching Strategies.* Promotes and demonstrates a variety of teaching strategies. A clear understanding of ITIP and related teaching models is evident.
- *Evaluation.* Demonstrates skillful use of clinical supervision during conferences and the writing of summative evaluations. All evaluation time lines are met; summative evaluations are completed before the last month of school. The supervision and evaluation of library, special education, counseling, involves (sic) appropriate support staff.

Area 4 - Student Programs

Performance Standards:

- *Student Oriented.* Demonstrates on a daily basis interest in and contact with students in a variety of settings.
- *Esteem Program.* Maintains student recognition and instructional student esteem (Positive Action) activities.
- *Discipline.* Keeps discipline rules centered on behaviors and corrective consequences. Considers circumstances in disciplinary actions.
- *Student Involvement.* Encourages student participation in school pride and decision-making via established pathways (leadership class, student government) for involvement.

Goal Setting and Planning

An important feature of TAPE is the goal-setting and planning component. In the spring of each school year, the Board of Directors begins the process of planning and setting systemwide goals for the upcoming year. According to Joki, the board reviews various reports "that come to it through administrative groups and begins discussions about program and curriculum changes. With the advice from the superintendent, the board sets goals for the coming school year." The district goals then "become an important feature of TAPE and appear in everyone's TAPE document," says Joki.

At the same time, principals begin "looking at the coming year and organizing individual building goals for each area in TAPE," Joki points out. In the spring, principals submit a "first draft" of individual and school goals to the superintendent and schedule a conference for discussing their plans and the incorporation of districtwide goals. After discussions and input from the superintendent and other central office supervisors, principals submit a final plan on or before September 15 and list the approved goals in the

"planning section" under each general review area in the TAPE evaluation document. These goals then become a part of each principal's annual leadership plan.

According to Debbie Beeson-Merkel, principal of Templeton Elementary in Tigard, the planning and goal-setting component of TAPE "really promotes professional growth because it is tied into a principal's job description. In addition, it helps you lay out goals for yourself and your building, then holds you accountable for those goals once you set them down." Thus, the planning sections of TAPE, along with performance standards, provide principals with job-specific goals upon which their performance will be judged. Beeson-Merkel also points out that the planning and goal-setting feature of TAPE is "a wonderful communication tool for working with central office administrators, for getting another person's input on goals, and for reevaluating and resetting goals."

When goals are identified for the year, the process of collecting data begins, another important aspect of TAPE.

Collecting Data for Evaluation

Accumulating information and data on principal performance and progress toward targeted goals is an ongoing process throughout the year in Tigard and one for which both principals and supervisors are responsible. According to Pete Lorain, principal of Fowler Junior High and a TAPE planning team member, "One of the things the superintendent did in the planning of TAPE was to ask principals for feedback on the evaluation practices of central office administrators. Some of the input he got was that they needed to spend more time observing in the buildings." As a result, "a priority was set for central office supervisors to spend more time in the building," observing and working with principals, Lorain notes.

A minimum of two formal supervisory observations per quarter (each year has three quarters) is required in each of the nine general review areas of the TAPE program. Supervisors often contact principals prior to a school-site visit and discuss specific areas that will be observed. Unscheduled observations are also held; according to Joki, "A principal may have half-a-dozen visits during a quarter, in addition to the two formal observations." Regardless whether the visit is scheduled or unscheduled, supervisors discuss their observations with principals and complete a written report after each observation. An example of the report form is provided in table 2.

Quarterly Review

At the end of each quarter, principals complete a self-appraisal of their performance and progress toward identified goals in each of the nine general review areas. Principals either rate their performance as "P," indicating

Table 2
TAPE Supervisory School/Program
Observation Form

SUPERVISOR _____ DATE _____

SCHOOL/PROGRAM OBSERVED _____

LEADERSHIP AREA(S) DISCUSSED: _____

[ ] Area 1: Gen. Administration

[ ] Area 2: Instruction or
[ ] Supervision/Evaluation

[ ] Area 3: Project BEST or Program Data Base

[ ] Area 4: Student Programs

[ ] Area 5: Community Relations

[ ] Area 6: Coordinated Curriculum

[ ] Area 7: Staff Development

[ ] Area 8: Support Services Management

[ ] Area 9: School/Program Budgeting

[ ] Area 10: School Relations

[ ] Area 11. Mandated Program Compliance

[ ] Area 12. _____

_____

COMMENTS: (Progress Noted or Target(s) Developed) _____

leadership performance is "progressing" and advancing goals and performance standards, or "T," indicating that leadership performance is "targeted" and needs to be increased. According to Joki, "One of the unique characteristics of TAPE is the self-appraisal component. We want principals to be interested in reflective thought about their performance and about what is going on in their schools." Thus, the self-appraisal is an important part of the quarterly and summative review process.

In addition to principals' self-appraisal, supervisors also complete a quarterly report that summarizes their school observation data. If supervisors rate a performance area with a "T" (targeting leadership performance that needs to be increased), they must provide the principal with a written "statement explaining why the principal hasn't been progressing toward the performance standard and then work with the principal to develop a specific goal to meet the performance standard," says Joki. The ratings by supervisors and principals are then placed in the TAPE document under the quarterly review section of each general review area.

Principals welcome supervisory visits to their schools. Lorain suggests that these visits serve an important purpose in the evaluation process in that they help to "create a positive and supportive relationship between the person doing the evaluation and the person being evaluated." Beeson-Merkel agrees: "I love to have someone in the building. Elementary principals are really isolated and it's nice to have an adult to talk to who is interested in your professional competence and growth." In addition, she says, "it is very beneficial for central office administrators to be in the building on a day when things are not all okay and see, for example, why curriculum might not be the top priority for that day."

The way the TAPE observations are structured, Joki notes, is another benefit. TAPE serves as an excellent focus for observing specific areas of performance and "as an agenda for observations." Before any supervisor visits a principal's school, says Joki, "we review the TAPE document that is on file and familiarize ourselves with the goals that have been set." Thus, "when we visit principals it is not just a coffee and donut session, but we actually discuss items of substance."

Staff Feedback on Principal Performance

One of the requirements in Tigard is an annual staff survey in each school. The district uses the *Teacher Opinion Inventory*, developed and copyrighted by the National Study of School Evaluation. The survey not only seeks staff opinions on principal performance, but also gathers staff perceptions about the entire school program. According to Joki, each principal has a staff member administer and tabulate the survey responses, and then the principal uses the information as a part of his or her self-appraisal. Listed below are a few examples of questions in the opinionnaire that are directed at

principals:

- How often are teachers in your school involved in the development of school policies which affect their work?
    - A. Always
    - B. Usually
    - C. About half the time
    - D. Seldom
    - E. Never
- What is your general feeling about the way you are treated by the principal?
    - A. Very Satisfied
    - B. Satisfied
    - C. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
    - D. Dissatisfied
    - E. Very dissatisfied
- Do you think class visitations by your principal are supportive of your efforts to improve instruction?
    - A. Always
    - B. Most of the time
    - C. About half the time
    - D. Rarely
    - E. Never
- When you have a disciplinary problem what help can you expect from the principal?
    - A. All the help I need
    - B. Most of the help I need
    - C. About half the help I need
    - D. Little of the help I need
    - E. None of the help I need

Principals see the staff survey as a beneficial tool for self-appraisal and as a means to understand staff and building needs. According to Beeson-Merkel, the staff survey "is very useful because it gives you a real sense of the tone of specific areas about which staff are concerned." She also uses the survey as a "barometer" to see if "there was a match between what I thought should happen and whether the teachers were ready to make it happen."

The survey results are not directly shared with the central office; however, principals do share the results with central office administrators in general terms. As we can see, Tigard principals and their supervisors collect a variety of information throughout the year and communicate frequently on

performance and progress toward goals. These efforts culminate in the final phase of the TAPE process—summative evaluation ratings and conferences.

Summative Review

In documenting the efforts made throughout the year on targeted goals and the various performance standards, principals and supervisors complete the summative rating section in each review area of TAPE. Joki states that a conference is held in "what we call the summative review." Although Joki delegates some of the observation and evaluation responsibilities to assistant superintendents, he is very involved in the evaluation process. "I believe the superintendent should be involved on some level of contact for supervisory purposes with principals," says Joki. Thus, he meets with each assistant who observes a principal and reviews the information so that "when I sit down with principals I have my own observations and also input from other assistants."

The following summative rating descriptors are used by principals and supervisors to indicate the level of performance in each of the nine review areas.

> *E - Exemplary*. An Exemplary rating indicates that the performance is regarded as a major success, or BEST practice. As a BEST practice, an Exemplary rating could serve as a model for other administrators. Exemplary ratings may be accompanied by Profile documentation and a BEST practice outline.
>
> *C - Competent*. A Competent rating indicates that the performance is regarded as meeting the general expectations of the district. A Competent rating indicates that the performance is regarded as above average.
>
> *A - Acceptable*. An Acceptable rating indicates that the performance is regarded as average and a potential growth target. An Acceptable rating, therefore, may be accompanied with improvement goal(s).
>
> *U - Unacceptable*. An Unacceptable rating can only be given by the supervisor. An Unacceptable rating indicates that the performance is regarded as sub-standard or below average. An Unacceptable rating must be accompanied with an explanation and improvement goal(s).
>
> *NA - Not Applicable*. A Not Applicable rating indicates that the administrator's assignment does not substantially include the area responsibility. A Not Applicable rating must have the supervisor's agreement.

During summative review conferences, principals and supervisors review the data collected during the year and the self-appraisal and supervisory ratings, and they set goals and begin planning for the following year, starting the TAPE cycle over again.

In describing her perceptions of the entire process, Beeson-Merkel says, "I am very positive about the TAPE process and feel about it the way I would hope my teachers feel about the process when it comes time for formal evaluations. It is an accumulation of all the things that represent your very best efforts."

Exemplary Performance Incentive

A final feature of the TAPE program is rewards for exemplary performance. Although the rewards are not merit pay, Joki notes, they do "provide incentive for outstanding performance." Principals who receive exemplary performance ratings in one or more areas of TAPE are eligible for a professional growth incentive. The superintendent makes the final decision on those principals who will receive the exemplary performance reward. Selected principals can choose among four possible rewards:

1. Attendance at a national convention.
2. A personalized professional investigation in an area of interest. For example, a principal may want to spend a week in a related field such as medicine or journalism.
3. Memberships in other professional organizations.
4. Open. A plan may be worked out between the principal and the superintendent.

Principals can also obtain the professional growth incentive through self or peer nomination for exemplary performance. "There are times and things that happen during the course of the year," says Joki, "that are significant and stand by themselves, apart from TAPE." Thus, principals can be nominated for the exemplary performance reward in the following non-TAPE assessment areas:

Crisis Management: Exemplary performance during an unexpected or extraordinary event. In this category, the principal "manages" the material and emotional stages of the event by providing stability, anticipating and responding to the event's complexity, and focusing staff, community, and students on the positive and the future. As a result, there is community support, staff "togetherness" and student well-being.

Outside Recognition: Selection by a prominent agency or group for exemplary leadership. In this category, the principal is recognized for professional achievement that promotes school, program, or district goals. As a result, the professional image of the principal and the district is greatly enhanced.

Innovation: Successful implementation of an approved pilot program. In this category, the principal provides leadership that adapts or develops a program that produces significant student or staff achievement. As a result, student or staff competence and/or esteem

is increased.

Research: Completion of major research that contributes to or promotes increased efficiency and/or effectiveness of students or staff. In this category, the principal researches and may publish a theoretical study that advances the profession and/or goals of the district. As a result, new ideas are generated for discussion and possible implementation.

Cost Savings: Leadership that produces significant cost savings without sacrificing efficiency or effectiveness. In this category, the principal designs and implements an idea or program that greatly reduces program cost while maintaining or increasing program success. As a result, the program and/or district uses its resources with greater returns at less cost.

A Distinguished Performance Review Committee consisting of one elementary principal, one secondary principal, a central office administrator, two retired administrators, and the superintendent review all nominations in confidence and determine those principals who will receive the Distinguished Principal Recognition. Selected principals are then recognized at the administrative council and school board meetings.

Tigard principals appear to value recognition for outstanding work in the form of professional development opportunities. Beeson-Merkel says, "I think outstanding performance should be rewarded, and I think that professional growth opportunities as a reward are tied to what we do and are morally right as a motivator." More important, she points out, "is that people are rewarded for the right reasons, that the information comes from the right places, and that it is fair. The process is more important than the reward itself."

Lorain agrees and notes that as long as the district has an acceptable salary schedule for all principals, "I like to see people rewarded. I think it is nice to be able to hear 'You have done a great job and as a token of our appreciation here is a reward'." The professional growth incentive appears to provide the proper motivation for Tigard principals to strive toward exemplary performance.

As we have seen, the TAPE evaluation program provides a comprehensive framework for assessing and enhancing principal performance. Planning, collection of objective data, clear expectations for principal performance, incentives for exemplary performance, and ongoing communication with and close supervision of principals are hallmarks of the system. When asked what advice he would give to other districts interested in improving their evaluation process for principals, Joki recommends going about the change process slowly, involving a broad base of people in designing the system, and developing a document that is "goal based and flexible."

Next, our attention turns to the North Clackamas evaluation program, which, like Tigard, developed slowly and involved a variety of people in its design and implementation.

Chapter 4

North Clackamas's Principal Evaluation System Promotes Growth and Professional Competence

North Clackamas School District (1988-89 enrollment approximately 11,807 in 24 schools) believes in promoting the continued professional growth of its principals and ensuring district patrons that only competent individuals serve in positions of school leadership. To encourage growth and ensure professional competence, the district began efforts to improve its evaluation process for principals during the 1986-87 school year. The new evaluation program that is now in place represents a departure from the district's traditional evaluation practices, which, practically all district administrators agreed, did little to foster professional development.

According to Superintendent Ben Schellenberg, "As a state we have gone through severe economic problems during the past few years, including funding for schools, which tended to cause us to put some very important things such as principal evaluation on the back burner." Now the issue of principals' professional development is receiving the attention it deserves. Schellenberg emphasizes that "the principal makes all the difference in a school in terms of the learning that takes place, school environment, and the direction of a school. Principals are going to make it or break it for us."

Although Schellenberg believes North Clackamas has very good principals, "we also began thinking about what we could do to enhance their skills and support their professional development. That is the major thrust of our new evaluation program."

A new approach to evaluation was also precipitated, in part, "by

principals asking to be stimulated in some different ways," says Schellenberg. "I really applaud the principal association for their positive attitude on this." Thus, North Clackamas has devoted a great deal of time and effort during the last few years to design a comprehensive evaluation program that supports new principals, holds principals accountable for professional behavior, and provides opportunities for principals to grow as educational leaders. This chapter describes the various components of North Clackamas's comprehensive evaluation process for principals and documents principal's and other district administrators' perceptions of the program.

Development of the Evaluation System

A key to North Clackamas's new evaluation program is the way in which the district went about developing it. According to Megan Walth, director of personnel services and committee leader of the project, inclusion of principals in the developmental process was vital to the program's effectiveness. "I don't think the program would have much meaning to principals if it were imposed on them. You must involve those people who will be effected by the change," says Walth. Schellenberg agrees: "Getting principals to be a part of the planning is an imperative" for the evaluation system to succeed. Thus, a committee of principals headed by Walth began designing the program during the 1986-87 school year.

The district also hired Dan Duke, at that time head of educational administration at Lewis and Clark College, to help the committee design the evaluation system. Duke, who had just completed the study of principal evaluation practices in Oregon schools cited in chapter 1, brought a wealth of information and insights to the committee. And, as Walth testifies, he really helped "us develop a program that was research based." Getting a "competent consultant" is sound advice for districts interested in changing their current evaluation system for principals, says Schellenberg.

Using research on effective schools and the role of the principal, as well as Duke's suggestions, the committee developed the program in incremental stages. After developing each component of the program, the committee would check with various administrative groups for their reactions and insights, Walth states. Thus, "It was not only the committee's program, but reflected changes from all the groups' input," says Walth.

Schellenberg notes that another important aspect of effective committee work is having "someone at the district level the principals trust to work with them and who will facilitate the project so that it moves forward and doesn't just stop." Walth was that person, and she competently led the committee through the developmental stage. The first task the committee undertook was determining the purposes of evaluating principals.

Purposes of Principal Evaluation

Like the Tigard School District's program described in the preceding chapter, the evaluation program in North Clackamas serves the twin purposes of accountability and professional improvement. According to the district's evaluation document, "the program is designed for two purposes: 1) to promote the continuing professional growth of North Clackamas principals and 2) to ensure district patrons that only competent individuals serve in positions of school leadership."

Schellenberg notes that accountability and professional development are both important aspects of a comprehensive evaluation system. On the accountability side, Schellenberg says it is important to "be able to look community people in the eye as the superintendent and say we have a good system. If we have people who have problems, we have got to be able to show that we are doings things with those individuals" to either improve them or dismiss them. A principal on the planning committee also believes that accountability is important. Kelly Hood, principal of Rowe Junior High, says that "one of the things we have been reluctant to do is a good job in evaluating principals. As a result, some people have fallen through the cracks." Hood believes that school systems must exert the "same intensity in evaluating principals as is done with teachers."

On the professional improvement side of evaluation, Schellenberg believes that a school district must design a system whereby principals are given the opportunity to grow professionally. "Generally," says Schellenberg, "we come from a strong base of principals and provide them with the necessary resources to become more effective." And, "we have a pretty generous application of resources available for principal growth and improvement. Those are the best dollars we spend."

Walth says the philosophical base of the new system is that "principals need to be given the opportunity to develop professionally. Thus, our new evaluation system encourages principals to stretch and take risks with as much support as possible." The program is based in research that emphasizes professional growth, competence, and assistance as characteristics of a sound evaluation system.

The evaluation program's twin purposes of professional growth and accountability are achieved through activities organized into three major components. A Professional Accountability Process, the first component, is designed to ensure the public that principals are competent and exhibit behaviors that meet the district's performance standards. Second, the Professional Assistance Process is designed to correct deficiencies in tenured principals' adherence to the district's performance standards. The final component is the Professional Development Process, designed to accommodate the growth needs of principals. According to the district's evaluation document, this last process "recognizes that all principals must continually

grow if they are to be effective leaders" (North Clackamas School District 1987).

In addition to these three components, the district has incorporated into the evaluation system a mentoring program for all new principals to assist them in understanding district performance standards and expectations. An administrative resource person is another feature of the program for principals in the Professional Assistance Process. The district's comprehensive evaluation process begins, however, with the accountability component.

Professional Accountability Component

The professional accountability process is intended for all new principals or experienced principals new to North Clackamas. Those individuals are expected to participate in the Professional Accountability Process for three years. Once principals have satisfactorily completed the first three-year cycle of evaluation, they can begin the Professional Development Process. However, every fourth year each principal returns for a one-year cycle in the Professional Accountability Process.

Performance Standards

At the heart of North Clackamas's accountability process are the performance standards by which principal performance is judged. According to Walth, an activity the committee completed after agreeing to the purposes of the evaluation system was determining general job responsibilities of the principalship and identifying specific behaviors and activities in a principal's job that the district valued and believed were important. She notes that the set of performance standards is the "job description for all principals." The committee identified the following eight general job functions for principals:

1. Curriculum Management and Instructional Practices
2. Facility and Site Use and Maintenance
3. Finance and Business Management
4. School and Community Relations
5. School and District Administrative Relationships
6. School Personnel
7. Student Activities and Athletics
8. Student Services

For each of these eight general areas of responsibility, a number of specific performance standards were defined. Clear expectations for principal performance are a priority in the district, and central office supervisors carefully explain these expectations to all principals. Specific performance standards for two of the eight areas are listed below:

Area 1. Curriculum Management and Instructional Practices

Definition: Curriculum management and instructional practices are those activities in which school personnel are engaged to plan, implement and evaluate the program of instruction for students.

1.1 Acquires and shares with staff, instructional and curriculum theory, principles and practices which are verified by research.

1.2 Adheres to State and District mandates regarding curriculum and instructional practices and textbook adoptions.

1.3 Assists staff members in investigating and evaluating promising instructional practices and curriculum theory. Appraises current and future curriculum needs and develops strategies for meeting these needs.

1.4 Assumes leadership with staff to develop and implement curriculum that meets identified student needs and is consistent with District guidelines.

1.5 Develops and administers an instructional and curricular assessment program within District guidelines which determines current and future curriculum needs and identifies student needs.

1.6 Develops and implements with staff a long range plan for instructional improvement.

1.7 Establishes and maintains a climate of high expectations for student achievement.

1.8 Organizes and administers supplemental/enrichment curriculum programs that meet student needs.

1.9 Provides resources for the instructional program and monitors the use in accordance with District guidelines.

Area 4. School and Community Relations

Definition: Public education is a community venture that requires consistent and cooperative involvement of the home, community, and the school. The school-community is defined, in operational terms, as the attendance area of a District school.

4.1 Assists elected and appointed advisory committees in the performance of functions described in Board Policy and Standard Practice.

4.2 Assumes the leadership of the development of parent organizations which support cooperation of home, school, and community.

4.3 Determines community needs for information about

school programs, students, and personnel.

4.4 Develops and implements strategies for communicating school information to the community including a citizen feedback system.

4.5 Initiates, monitors and evaluates the school-community communication system.

4.6 Interprets Board policy to the community in matters pertaining to the use and operations of the school and school programs.

Collecting Information on Performance Standards

The deputy superintendent in charge of secondary education and the director of elementary education are the central office supervisors responsible for collecting information on principal performance and completing evaluations. A minimum of three onsite observations is required each year, but as Gerald Scovil, director of elementary education, says, "I am in the building frequently throughout the year."

Supervisors do not use a checklist format for rating principal performance in the Professional Accountability Process, but instead provide principals with narrative reports after each visit and at the end-of-year summative evaluation conference. The developmental committee did design an "evaluation worksheet" on which supervisors can log observation notes relative to each performance indicator during onsite visits. This form also includes space to record artifact data supporting an indicator; parent, student, and teacher input on an indicator; and evidence of student achievement.

In addition to direct observations by supervisors, the district recently instituted a system where supervisors and peers confer on principal teacher observation and conferencing skills. Principals videotape teacher postobservation conferences and then meet with their mentor and supervisor to review the tape and obtain feedback on their performance. According to Dave Larson, principal of Ardenwald Elementary, who was cited in the 1988 OSSC Bulletin on *Inducting Principals*, the videotaping and peer-supervisory conferences have "probably been the most beneficial activity for me instructionally." He also says that "a side benefit is that we all have a common language and the same database" from which to work.

Goal Setting–Management by Objectives (MBO)

In addition to the performance standards, all North Clackamas principals are expected to set individual goals and objectives necessary to meet district goals, regardless of the evaluation phase they are in. As in Tigard, the goal-setting process begins in the spring with the board setting district goals. Once those goals are set, principals incorporate them into a personal

set of goals that they design with their supervisor. North Clackamas's title for this aspect of the evaluation program is MBO (Management by Objectives).

Each district goal is further defined in terms of several objectives, which are listed on a planning document that specifies due dates for each objective, resources for assistance, and the means by which the goal will be measured. A sample planning document is provided in table 3, which contains several objectives for meeting one district goal in the area of classroom instruction and management. The code "I" indicates that the objective is in the implementation phase (as opposed to the developmental or maintenance phase).

Principals are expected to gather documentation throughout the year that provides evidence of progress toward identified goals and objectives. At the end of each year, all principals complete a written report on an MBO summary form that they submit to their central office supervisor and discuss in a summative evaluation conference. The form solicits information about how the goal has been met, areas of the goal that were not accomplished, and areas where the goal has been exceeded.

Mentor Assistance for New Principals

To assist new principals in meeting the requirements of the Professional Accountability Process, the district provides a thorough orientation to the entire evaluation process at the beginning of their employment in the district. In addition, each principal new to North Clackamas is assigned a mentor by the director of personnel services. This mentor program, featured in the October 1988 OSSC Bulletin, helps beginning principals master district performance standards and become familiar with district rules, expectations, and procedures. Mentor principals are not directly involved in evaluating new principals, but are invited to sit in on conferences between new principals and their supervisors.

According to Walth, the mentor program is one of the unique features of the new evaluation program. It provides beginners with a system for informal advice, feedback on their performance, and collegial support. Scovil says that the "incorporation of the mentor has been a tremendous plus. Principals are really excited about it, it fulfills a real need, and it is very helpful to the mentor as well." Mentor principals are remunerated at the daily salary rate for extra days worked outside the regular contract for assisting new principals. In addition, a half-day salary rate per month is provided for performing mentor responsibilities during the regular contract time.

Professional Assistance Component

For those principals not meeting the specified performance standards,

Table 3
Sample Planning Document Containing District Goal and Objectives

C. CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION AND MANAGEMENT

District Goal: Each principal will use clinical supervision in appropriate conferences and receive training in Clinical Instruction and Management in 1988-89.

Level	Objective(s)	Code	Completion Date	Resources	Measure	Documentation Evaluation
1.	Each principal will satisfactorily demonstrate ability to conduct an effective instruction conference to be observed and evaluated by their supervisor either on tape or in person. Each principal will receive written feedback in their formal evaluation.	I	6/89	*Consultants *Other Admin. *VCR's *Inst. Team	*Training Completed *Conference Summaries and Feedback *Resources Critiques	
2.	Each principal will demonstrate ability to conduct an effective conference to be observed and given feedback by a consultant.	I	6/89	(See above)	(See above)	
3.	(Secondary ONLY) Each principal will participate in a peer coaching team with their building administrators. Each administrator will receive feedback once from another team member.	I	6/89	(See above)	(See above)	
4.	(Elementary ONLY) Each principal will participate in a peer coaching team where each administrator conducts one conference and receives feedback from their peer.	I	6/89	(See above)	(See above)	
5.	Each principal will satisfactorily complete the Classroom Instruction and Management course.					

Source: North Clackamas School District No. 12 (1987)

the district designed a Professional Assistance Process as part of the evaluation program to assist tenured principals in correcting their deficiencies. According to the district policy document on evaluation, a principal not meeting the district performance standards is placed in a remediation cycle whereby the supervisor and director of personnel services determine the process to correct the deficiency. "Remediation is considered primarily as a correction tool rather than a disciplinary measure. Yet, disciplinary action can be taken at any appropriate time regardless of a principal's status on the evaluation or remediation cycle," the policy states.

While in a remediation cycle, the supervisor and the director of personnel work closely with the principal to assist in correcting the identified deficiency. Walth says, "All the way through the process we keep the principal well informed of what the problem is, how we know it is a problem, and what the principal must do to address the problem." The district also involves an experienced principal as an "administrative resource person" to work with a principal on a professional assistance plan. Although the resource principal does not directly conduct evaluations, he or she does play an important role in the assistance process. For this reason, the district has developed a set of expectations and selection criteria for the position that includes the following elements:

Resource Principal Qualifications:

1. Experienced principal with expertise in the area of principal's deficiencies.
2. A principal who has met or exceeded all of the principal's specific job functions.
3. Interested in participation.
4. Good communication skills.

Responsibilities:

1. Review with the supervisor, the director of personnel, and the principal with deficiencies, the background, data, and evidence of those deficiencies.
2. Assist the supervisor and director of personnel with a plan to remediate the principal.
3. Observe the principal in specific functions and provide feedback with suggestions for correction.
4. Model appropriate behavior for the principal.
5. Give support and assistance throughout the plan.
6. Meet regularly with the principal.
7. Assist the supervisor in assessing the growth of the principal.
8. Make recommendations for further assistance for the principal to the supervisor.

9. Maintain confidentiality of the principal and supervisor.

Length of Assignment:

Assignment will begin with the identification of the administrative resource person and continue through the plan of remediation/ assistance for the principal with deficiencies. Assignments will be made on need and the request of the supervisor and the principal.

Remuneration:

The daily salary rate will be paid for extra days worked as an administrative resource person outside of the regular contract time. A half-day salary rate per month will be paid for performing peer coach responsibilities during the regular contract time. If the administrative resource person desires, with the supervisor approval, the administrative resource person may have the option of compensatory time off, and/or the ability to attend professional conferences or workshops with reimbursement equal to the above salary rates.

In the event of a need to dismiss or reassign a principal, Walth advises the use of legal counsel to ensure compliance with procedures listed in the Fair Dismissal Law.

Although North Clackamas has given careful attention to the competence of its principals, the district has also designed what many administrators consider the most outstanding feature of the new evaluation system—the professional development component.

Professional Development Component

Encouraging principal improvement and accommodating the growth needs of principals are new features of North Clackamas's evaluation program. "It is recognized that all principals must continually grow if they are to be effective leaders," states the evaluation document. "It also is acknowledged that no two principals' growth needs are identical." Thus, principals and their supervisors carefully develop written individual growth plans that encourage principals to take risks and improve.

This component is designed to foster the planning and implementation of growth opportunities for veteran principals. (Principals with three or fewer years in the district remain, therefore, in the accountability phase.) In the Professional Development Process, participating principals do not go through the regular evaluation cycle each year, but are expected to maintain performance standards and complete MBO planning and goal-setting activities. However, a principal may opt out of the development component at any time and return to the professional accountability phase. Supervisors, too, may elect to place a principal back on the accountability cycle if performance falls below district expectations.

Growth Plans

At the heart of the Professional Development Process is the growth plan consisting of goals leading to improvement of a principal's technical skills, professional knowledge, or understanding of schooling and administration. "Growth is assumed to represent development above and beyond competence," the evaluation documents states. Thus, principals "are required to stretch and take risks," says Walth.

The growth plan is implemented over a two-to-three-year period to provide principals with ample time to undertake significant goals. "One of the reasons the planning team recommended that a growth plan extend for more than one year, " says Walth, "was that research indicates long-range goals are really more beneficial and feasible than just trying to accomplish something in one year." In addition, the individual plans developed by participating principals are expected to stand a reasonable chance of benefiting the district.

As Schellenberg noted, North Clackamas provides ample resources to ensure principal growth and improvement. These resources for principals in the Professional Development Process include tuition reimbursement, release time, conference or workshop stipends, material, special equipment, interns, and travel allowances. Principals working on the multiyear professional development plan write a progress report at the end of each school year, documenting progress toward original goals, requests for additional material needs, or requests to modify their original plan.

Hood, a principal participating in the professional development component, is designing a curriculum mapping system to obtain congruence between the district testing and instructional programs. The district has provided Hood with the opportunity to attend workshops and consult with top educators in the field. "I spent two days in Atlanta with Fenwick English, who has written extensively about curriculum mapping, and I picked his brain," says Hood. Resources are also available to Hood for staff development. "In the end, I will have a finished document that is beneficial to my school and the district as well."

Roger Capps, principal of Clackamas Elementary and another participating principal, is researching another important topic. "I am in a school," says Capps, "with a high turnover among students, and I am curious to find out the effect turnover has on student achievement test scores." Capps is designing, with the assistance of his staff, instructional models and strategies that "we can use to help those students who are not going to be in our schools very long." As it did for Hood, the district has provided Capps with resources to assist in his professional growth plan, including inservice in the use of computer applications for tracking and profiling student turnover and test data.

Professional Growth Benefits

Principals are enthusiastic about the opportunity to develop personal

plans for professional growth and step out of the regular evaluation cycle. Capps states, "The thing that got me excited about this was being self-motivated and doing my own goal setting. I wanted a challenge to do something different and this system helped." Hood put it this way: "It takes you off the treadmill of being evaluated every year" and lets you pursue personal and individual growth opportunities.

Schellenberg believes the professional growth component is very beneficial not only to the principal, but the district as well. "We have had some people step forward and really do some significant things," he says, "and I predict that we will see activities, products, and results that we would not have seen if we had not had this component." He emphasizes that the principals' efforts will result in activities in the school system that "are better for kids."

In addition to this opportunity to develop a personalized and meaningful plan for professional development, North Clackamas also provides a cash or in-kind incentive for principals who accomplish their professional growth goals. At the end of the three-year cycle, a principal receives monies equal to 2.5 percent of a certain level on the district's administrative salary schedule (for example, $1,272.50 for 1986-87). Principals can be paid in the form of a lump sum bonus, an expense-paid conference, paid days off, tax shelter annuities, or other rewards mutually agreed upon by the principal and the supervisor.

Schellenberg sees the financial incentive as an important element of the professional growth component. "If someone is doing an exemplary job and is willing to take a risk and go beyond the regular performance expectations," says Schellenberg, "you need to have some kudos to really say, 'Good for you'." It is one thing to "give them a pat on the back or write them a letter," says Schellenberg, "but it is another thing to say, 'Here are some financial rewards or here are some alternatives that you can use'. It gives principals some motivation."

Testimony to the truth that investing in principals is an indicator of school system quality is the number of award-winning schools in North Clackamas. Three years in a row North Clackamas schools were acclaimed by the U.S. Department of Education's National Secondary Schools Recognition Award Program as part of the nation's 200 best secondary schools. In 1986 Rowe Junior High School, 1985 Rex Putnam High School, and 1984 Clackamas High School and McLoughlin Junior High were winners of the prestigious award.

As we have seen from the examples of Oregon districts recorded in these pages, evaluating principals is an activity that school districts must thoroughly plan and carry out to ensure professional competence and growth. Now what remains for us to do is to summarize some of the key findings in the form of recommendations for districts that want to improve their evaluation process for principals.

Chapter 5

Conclusion and Recommendations

All principals are evaluated. Regardless of the amount and type of information collected, or how often formal reports are written, principals are evaluated—and rather often. As Bolton suggests, they are evaluated primarily by those who supervise them, by teachers, and by parents; "but students, peers, and taxpayers also evaluate them." Since evaluating principals cannot be avoided, "it is a question of how systematic the evaluation process should be in order for the system of evaluation to be most effective in terms of how much it assists the school district in effecting its goals and objectives," writes Bolton.

The research findings and practical knowledge in the literature, along with the practices of Oregon schools recorded in these pages, provide clear evidence that a systematic and comprehensive approach to evaluating principals is critical to improving principals' performance. From all this evidence, we have seen that the following strategies characterize a successful evaluation program for principals. Administrators and school boards can assess the status of their principal evaluation methods by determining whether these strategies are absent or present in their districts.

1. Identify the purposes of evaluation. As a beginning, school officials and other members of the district must identify the district's philosophy toward evaluation and the purposes of the evaluation process. Although the reasons for evaluating principals can be numerous, districts should commit themselves to encouraging professional growth (formative purpose) and ensuring district patrons that principals are competent (summative purpose).

If the evaluation system is to be effective, the purposes must be discussed, identified, and agreed upon by all who are involved in the process. Developing a written statement of philosophy that clearly and succinctly articulates the purposes of evaluation and summarizes the values of all who

are affected by the process may, therefore, be an advisable and useful first step in designing an effective program of evaluation for principals.

2. Develop clear performance expectations. Once the purposes of evaluation are in place, school districts should identify the attitudes and behaviors that district members value and hold for principals. Those values should be translated into a clearly understood, written set of performance standards and expectations by which principal performance will be judged. Then, superintendents must communicate those expectations to principals and ensure that principals understand the tasks they are to perform and the standards by which their performance will be assessed. Because most people believe more in what a person does than in what a person says or writes, superintendents and supervisors must back up written expectations with personal behaviors and actions that model the performance standards they expect of principals.

3. Involve principals in planning. Districts wanting to develop an evaluation process that principals will embrace must involve them in the development of the program. A committee representative of principals and central office personnel appears to be a fruitful approach to ensure that principals understand and support the evaluation program.

Planning or revising evaluation methods should be done carefully, slowly, and systematically. Moreover, districts should enlist the services of a knowledgeable consultant, visit with other districts implementing effective evaluation systems, and review research on effective leadership and exemplary evaluation techniques to better ensure that a sound system will be designed and implemented.

4. Encourage goal setting and self-reflection. Districts would be well advised to encourage, or even require, that principals set individual and school building goals that will enhance their performance and contribute to systemwide goals and objectives. For these goals to be effective, the board and superintendent must first set meaningful and timely goals for the district so that principals can incorporate those goals in their planning for the year. Principals may need assistance in developing meaningful goals that will have a significant impact on the school program.

Districts should also encourage principals to spend time in reflective thought about their performance. Self-appraisal of performance and progress toward written goals is an activity that principals should do throughout the year and as part of end-of-year final evaluations. The familiar adage "You don't have to be ill to get better" characterizes the importance of principals' analyzing areas for improvement and developing a specific plan to enhance their performance and professional growth.

6. Observe principals in action and often. Clearly the evaluation and supervision of principals are improved when superintendents or central office supervisors devote ample time to working with and observing principals. Superintendents or supervisors should schedule school visitations throughout the year for observing principal performance and hold preconfer-

ences prior to visits for identifying the reasons for an observation and specific activities that the supervisor will observe.

Supervisors should use scheduled and unscheduled observations throughout the year, carefully recording principals' words and behaviors that can be used for analysis and interpretation in postobservation conferences. Carefully planned conferences between supervisors and principals should be held as soon as possible after observations to analyze, interpret, and discuss collected data. In those conferences, evaluators should intersperse constructive and positive feedback and then assist principals in developing a plan for growth that includes specific learning objectives and resources needed.

7. Involve peers and teachers in providing feedback. Although principals' supervisors should have the primary responsibility for observations and evaluations, districts should also consider providing principals with confidential feedback from peers and teachers. A collegial supervisory model, such as Peer-Assisted Leadership, can provide principals with useful feedback on their performance.

In addition to a principal's peers, no one is in a better position than teachers to determine whether a principal is performing satisfactorily. Thus, providing principals with a means to collect and assess their teachers' perceptions of how well they are doing, such as the *Excellent Principal Inventory*, is another promising strategy to enhance principals' self-appraisal efforts. To be effective, teachers must be guaranteed anonymity and the principal should not be required to share the results with central office supervisors. Principals should also be assisted in interpreting the results of teacher feedback. Use of a confidential consultant may, therefore, be advisable and help principals develop productive strategies to improve areas of perceived weakness.

8. Collect artifacts. Principals and their supervisors should collect other sources of information that provide evidence of the results and effects of leadership. Student test data and evidence of curriculum and instructional efforts; written evidence of principals' progress toward individual, school, and systemwide goals; newspaper clippings and letters to students, parents, and teachers; and logs of how principals spend their time are examples of artifacts that may be collected and analyzed. To be effective, principals and supervisors should decide early in the year the data to be collected and how it will be used in the evaluation process.

9. Adopt a cyclical approach to evaluation. Evaluation should be an ongoing and continuous process. Therefore, districts should design their evaluation program so that three important phases—planning, collecting, and using information—are used as guidelines for the process. Attention must be given to each phase of the process, especially the formative phase of collecting and communicating information throughout the year. Clearly, districts that concentrate only on the summative phase of the process do little to improve principal performance. From the careful planning for evaluation conducted in phase 1 and the rigorous collection and sharing of information

in phase 2, use of the information in phase 3 should naturally lead back to beginning the cycle of evaluation over again. Only through such a systematic process can supervisors make meaningful decisions regarding employment status and pay.

10. Reward outstanding performance. Districts should reward those who exercise outstanding school leadership. Public recognition, letters of appreciation, and professional growth opportunities are ways superiors can recognize those principals who go beyond the call of duty. Because cash incentives for motivating principals may be difficult for school districts to design and administer, professional development opportunities may be a more promising route to rewarding those principals who exhibit exemplary performance.

To succeed, the district must clearly define the characteristics of outstanding performance, specify the criteria by which principals' performance will be judged, and communicate how principals receive incentive recognition. Furthermore, principals must believe that the district's application of incentives is done in a fair and impartial manner, based on each principal's identifiable acts that provide evidence of outstanding performance.

Clearly, a principal's leadership is among the most critical elements necessary for building excellent schools throughout our nation. Getting a "cracker-jack" principal certainly doesn't end when a principal receives certification and assumes duties as the leader of a school. Thus, school districts must devote considerable time and resources to help principals continue their professional growth. A well-designed and comprehensive evaluation system is one way to ensure such growth.

Yes, the public needs to be assured that only competent individuals are in positions of school leadership. That is without question. But principals need to be provided with competent supervision and guidance through sound evaluation practices to fulfill their important leadership role. The responsibility for professional improvement, however, should not rest only on supervisory shoulders. Principals themselves must be committed to improving their skills, as growth usually occurs when the principal believes he or she can and should continue to improve. Evaluation systems, therefore, should be designed in such a way that evaluation is a mutual effort between principals and those who supervise them. Only through such cooperative efforts will school districts be able to ensure that our nation's schools will continue to improve.

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